

Message Text

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12

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /148 W

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R 130851Z SEP 73

FM AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2126

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, MZ

SUBJ: THE WAR: IS NO NEWS GOOD NEWS?

REF: (A) LUANDA 460; (B) LOURENCO MARQUES 564; (C) LOURENCO
MARQUES 607; (D) LOURENCO MARQUES A-133

1. SINCE ASSUMPTION OF COMMAND BY GENERAL BASTO MACHADO,
VERY LITTLE WAR NEWS HAS APPEARED IN MOZAMBIQUE PRESS. LAST
ITEM WE HAVE SEEN FEATURED WAS KILLING OF FIVE FRELIMO IN
TETE AREA, INCLUDING TWO BROTHERS KNOWN FOR "VARIOUS VIOLENT
ACTS AGAINST POPULATIONS" DURING JOINT ARMY-DGS OPERATION
REPORTED AUGUST 26. A PRESS REPORT OF AUGUST 24 MENTIONED
FRELIMO ATTACK ON NHACAMBA ALDEAMENTO, IN TETE, KILLING 14
CIVILIANS AND ONE GUARD; THIS MIGHT BE ATTACK MENTIONED TO
VISITOR BY TETE GOVERNOR (REF. A). PRESS ACCOUNTS OF GRADUA-
TION CEREMONIES FOR NEW EIGHTH MOZAMBIQUE COMMANDO COMPANY,
IN MONTEPUEZ ON SEPTEMBER 10, NOTED RECENT COMMANDO ACTIONS
IN CABO DELGADO WHICH KILLED TOTAL OF NINE ENEMY, WOUNDED
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FOUR, AND CAPTURED "FRELIMO PRODUCTION CHIEF" FOR CABO DEL-

GADO. LAST OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE CONCERNED REPORTED ABORTIVE ROCKET ATTACK ON TETE CITY ON AUGUST 10 (REF. B).

2. NEVERTHELESS, VAGUE RUMORS OF FRELIMO ATTACKS IN TETE AREA OCCASIONALLY CROP UP IN LOURENCO MARQUES, AND SOME PEOPLE SAY LISBON PRESS IS PUBLISHING WAR NEWS NOT RELEASED HERE. BUT SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS, WHICH IN PAST HAS OFTEN MENTIONED INCIDENTS NOT PUBLISHED LOCALLY, HAS BEEN AS QUIET AS LOCAL PAPERS. IN INTERVIEW WITH LISBON DIARIO DE NOTICIAS (REPRINTED HERE), BEFORE HE RETURNED LOURENCO MARQUES SEPTEMBER 7 (REF. C) GOVERNOR GENERAL WAS ASKED ABOUT REPORTED GREAT TENSION AND FEAR OF URBAN TERROR IN LOURENCO MARQUES AND BEIRA, AND ALLEGED POSTING OF SUBVERSIVE POSTERS IN BEIRA. HE EMPHATICALLY DENIED THAT SUCH TENSION -- WHICH WE HAVE NOT SENSED -- HAD ANY EXISTANCE.

3. PRESS HAS GIVEN SCANT COVERAGE DEPARTURE COL. MARTINS VIDEIRA, MILITARY COMMANDER AND GOVERNOR OF TETE DISTRICT, COL. VIDEIRA, WHO LEFT TETE SEPTEMBER 6, HAD SERVED IN DUAL ROLE FOR A YEAR, AFTER REPLACING THE AILING COL. ROCHA SIMOES. HIS DEPARTURE WAS PRESUMABLY LINKED WITH THE ISSUANCE OF OVERSEAS MINISTRY PORTARIA OF SEPTEMBER 1, DROPPING TETE FROM LIST OF PLACES WHERE COMBINING OF CIVILIAN JOBS IS AUTHORIZED.

4. COL. JACINTO FRADE, WHO HAD REPRESENTED HIGH COMMAND IN MOZAMBIQUE DURING GENERAL KAULZA DE ARRIAGA'S TENURE, AND DURING PAST YEAR PROVIDED DETAILED MONTHLY MILITARY BRIEFINGS TO CONSULAR CORPS, HAS BEEN REPLACED BY COL. FERNANDO GODOFREDO DA COSTA NOGUEIRA DE FREITAS, AS OF BEGINNING OF SEPTEMBER. THERE IS AS YET NO INDICATION WHETHER COL. FREITAS, WHO IS REPORTEDLY NEW IN MOZAMBIQUE, WILL BE INSTRUCTED TO CONTINUE THE BRIEFINGS, WHICH FOR THE MOMENT REMAIN IN ABEYANCE.

5. GOVERNOR GENERAL, IN DIARIO DE NOTICIAS INTERVIEW, SAID SITUATION IN TETE HAD IMPROVED FOLLOWING DEFECTIONS (REF. D) OF FRELIMO MILITARY COMMANDERS, BUT ADMITTED THAT SMALL FRELIMO GROUPS OPERATING IN THE NORTH OF BEIRA AND VILA PEREIRA DISTRICTS HAVE NOT BEEN ENTIRELY ELIMINATED. A DGS SOURCE ALSO TOLD ME LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RECENTLY THAT SITUATION RELATIVELY QUIET, WITH FRELIMO EXPECTED TO TRY NEXT BIG INITIATIVES IN NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER.

6. COMMENT: IT SEEMS PROBABLY THAT CURRENT LACK OF WAR NEWS DUE TO SEVERAL FACTORS. GENERAL BASTO MACHADO IS REPORTEDLY MORE TACITURN THAN HIS PUBLIC-OPINION CONSCIOUS PREDECESSOR, AND MAY WISH ASSESS SITUATION THOROUGHLY BEFORE DECIDING ON PUBLICITY STRATEGY. IN ANY CASE, OPERATIONS AND INCIDENTS

IN BEIRA-VILA PERY AREA UNLIKELY BE GIVEN PUBLICITY UNLESS
THEY BOUND TO COME TO PUBLIC NOTICE ANYWAY (WHICH WOULD PROBABLY
APPLY ANY FURTHER ATTACK AGAINST TOURISTS OR GORONGOZA GAME
RESERVE FACILITIES), OR UNLESS THEY AMOUNTED TO NOTABLE
VICTORIES. SEEMS ALSO PROBABLE THAT NEW INITIATIVES BEING
PLANNED BY PORTUGUESE IN TETE, PRESUMABLY TIED TO REPLACEMENT
OF ZONE COMMANDER, AND THIS COULD MEAN A LULL IN PORTUGUESE
ACTIVITY UNTIL NEW APPROACHES ARE IMPLEMENTED, WHILE FRELIMO
MAY BE WAITING TO TRY A SPECTACULAR FOR BENEFIT OF UN GENERAL
ASSEMBLY AND SEPTEMBER 25 REVOLUTIONARY ANNIVERSARY.
MACDOUGALL

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